



## Letter of Support

April 23, 2007

Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin

Federal Surface Transportation Reauthorization

Washington, DC

### **MERITS OF THE PROJECT:**

In 2006 the Mobridge City Council, under Mayor Taylor Oster, passed a resolution and developed a task force, Dakota Expressway Extension Task Force (DEETF), to extend the Dakota Expressway from Aberdeen to Mobridge in order to bring population and economic growth to the cities and counties along the northern tier of South Dakota and to the State of South Dakota as well.

Studies show the benefit of the 4-lane highway system and the increase in average daily traffic flow once a 4-lane highway is built. It only makes sense that the better and more efficient a roadway, the more it becomes traveled to the benefit of those who live along its route. Today, more people from Mobridge travel to Sioux Falls via Aberdeen than did 2 years ago because of the Dakota Expressway. Aberdeen is experiencing a new surge in industrial development because of the expressway. The average daily traffic flow between I-29 and Aberdeen has greatly increased because of this safer and more efficient roadway and the economic effects have greatly impacted everyone along its route.

The Dakota Expressway was a primary consideration for Molded Fiber Glass, which will employ 700 persons, to select Aberdeen as the location to build its business. Aberdeen also recently announced Coventry Health Care, employing about 200 persons, as another business locating in Aberdeen. Northern Beef Packers are presently building a plant in Aberdeen and this coupled with new ethanol plants along the northern tier will greatly increase the farm to market traffic all along Highway 12 from west of Aberdeen and counties west of Mobridge as well.

We in Mobridge believe that the extension of the Dakota Expressway from Aberdeen will have this same impact to Mobridge and those cities and counties between Mobridge and Aberdeen. We believe that the population and economic growth that will come with 4 lanes of traffic will not only be a benefit for those of us living in the northern tier of

South Dakota but will benefit all of South Dakota. There will be an increase in tourism, hunting and fishing by non-residents, not to mention the benefits from commerce and trade. All this will be beneficial to the Standing Rock Indian Reservation and to those communities and counties west of Mobridge as well, bringing better products closer to their doorsteps and keeping shoppers in South Dakota.

Mobridge is the host of many fishing tournaments during the spring and summer months and hosts an ice fishing tournament in January each year as well. The economic impact of a three-day tournament is roughly \$100,000. In 2008 Mobridge hosted Cabela's National Team Walleye Championship with an economic impact of \$733,750. Other major fishing tournaments are hosted nearby Mobridge on Lake Oahe. New Evarts Lodge has hosted the Annual Wolves on the Water for over 20 years. New Evarts attracts many out of state visitors and lots are being purchased along Lake Oahe where many homes have been built over the past 10 years. Pollock hosts the West Pollock Resort Ice Fishing and the Annual Pollock Men's Club Fishing tournaments. Mobridge has always been a haven for pheasant hunters and offers many other types of bird and large game hunting in Walworth and surrounding counties attracting many out of state residents to our area. In the early part of pheasant season hunters can enjoy fishing on Lake Oahe as well.

Application of the goals of the Governor Rounds "2010 Initiative" has already shown improvement to tourism in the Mobridge area. South Dakota GF&P took over the Indian Creek Campgrounds from the Corp of Engineers about 6 years ago and made major improvements to the Campground at Indian Creek and Revheim Bay. Tourism visitors to the Indian Creek Campground in 2006 were 67,000, in 2007 were 63,000, and for 2008 were 73,000. Over the past two years, Walworth County has led the state in tourism growth with a 14.2% increase in 2007 and a 26.3% increase in 2008. Aberdeen, South Dakota has also had an impressive surge in tourism with the completion of the Dakota Expressway from I-29 to Aberdeen and through their efforts in marketing. Continued and aggressive marketing by Mobridge, The Northern Route to the Black Hills, and the South Dakota Department of Tourism of the northern tier opportunities for tourists will definitely increase tourism, hunting and fishing, and recreational camping in the Mobridge area in the future.

In addition to all of the aforementioned, Mobridge appointed a Power Plant Task Force in 2001 to assist with locating a 4.3 billion dollar Next Generation Power Plant, with carbon capture and sequestration included, in Walworth County. This plant will employ 1000 workers during construction the first four years, 1750 at the peak of construction, and 150 to 200 personnel after it goes into operation. One of the byproducts will be fertilizer. Estimates for a pipeline to the oil fields in Baker, Montana are almost completed as well. There were 5 perspective sites and presently Walworth County is the preferred site for this construction pending the proper and necessary approval of Federal and State authorities.

Mobridge and the community members of the Dakota Expressway Extension Task Force (DEETF) believe that extending the Dakota Expressway from Aberdeen to Mobridge will enhance traffic safety, reduce travel time, and improve tourism and economic productivity. Mobridge would gain additional retailers and more variety in product and services. Mobridge, all of the communities between Aberdeen and Mobridge, the Standing Rock Indian Reservation and those communities and counties west of Mobridge and north and south of Highway 12, will all benefit by bringing reduced consumer costs

(comparative prices and reduced shipping costs) and better products to their area's and Mobridge, keeping Mobridge shoppers in Mobridge and those South Dakota residents who shop in North Dakota back to Mobridge to the benefit of our present retailers. This would also bring sales tax revenues back to the State of South Dakota as well.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT FORUMS:**

The Dakota Expressway Extension Task Force (DEETF) will work with the South Dakota Department of Transportation to hold the necessary public forums in order to provide a process by which the public will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the project.

Our task force will also be requesting "Letters of Support" from economic interests across the northern tier from Aberdeen to Mobridge in the near future.

### **STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THIS PROJECT;**

In support of the extension for the Dakota Expressway from Aberdeen to Mobridge the following cities along the northern tier have passed resolutions or written letters of support and became members of Dakota Expressway Extension Task Force (DEETF) realizing that this will help with population and economic growth for them as well.

Aberdeen	Ipswich	Roscoe	Hosmer	Bowdle	Selby
Hoven	Akaska	Glenham	Mound City	Pollock	Hettinger
Lemmon	Eureka	Edmonds Co	Walworth Co	Mclaughlin	Mobridge
Northern Route to the Black Hills Organization			Tom & Danielle Aman Foundation		
Selby Community Club					

### **FUNDING REQUEST FOR THIS PROJECT;**

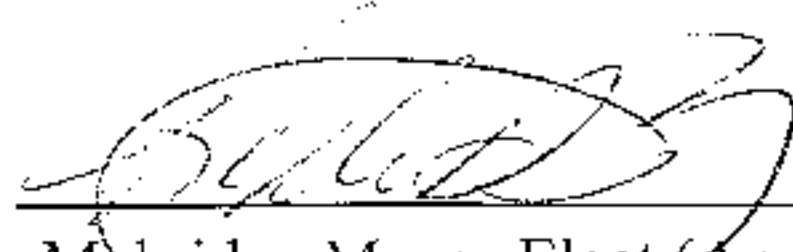
The Dakota Expressway Extension Task Force (DEETF) realizes that funding for the Dakota Expressway Extension is the major and most critical issue facing our future success.

We have no other sources of funding for this project. Although we have been keeping Governor Rounds, the State Department of Transportation and State Legislators across the northern tier of South Dakota apprised of our intent and progress, we are not currently on any State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and are not included in the States Long-Range Transportation Plan. We have not received any prior funding from any State, local or private source and are not expecting any funding from these sources in the future.

We are seeking funding through Federal DOT appropriations to the State of South Dakota Department of Transportation for the entire cost of this project.

Respectfully,

 Dennis P. Deeter DEETF Chairman  
Mobridge City Council, Ward II

 Bill D. Smith  
Mobridge Mayor Elect (April 14, 2009)

Mobridge Task Force Members

Larry Atkinson

Bruce Brekke

Cindy Melcher

Steve Gasser

Gary Steuck

Loretta Hernandez

Attachments: Copies of Signed Resolutions in Support

CC: Senator Tim Johnson

Senator John Thune